

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Colombia	REPORT NO.	<input type="text"/>	25X1A
SUBJECT	Public Order Situation	DATE DISTR.	7 April 1954	
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1. Colombian authorities have been relatively successful in maintaining order in recent weeks. However, noteworthy disturbances have taken place in the rural areas of Huila and Tolima, and others of lesser magnitude have occurred in Valle and Caldas. Generally, attacks have been made on small towns by raiding bands. In some cases this activity bore the stamp of pure banditry, but it seems fairly clear that most of the outbreaks were caused by Conservative followers of Laureano GOMEZ. The majority of the victims have been Liberals. Probably some of the attacks had the approval of local Conservative officials, but in general they were organized by small groups without outside support.
2. The only incidents involving Army outposts have been those in the Llanos, where has been persecuting former guerrillas. Thus far the guerrillas have not responded, but they have been considering taking up arms once again. There is no evidence that former guerrillas have initiated or responded to attacks anywhere, although it is true that some Liberals in Huila have fought back when attacked. Generally, the disturbances have consisted of murders, assaults, and other crimes; and the reasons behind these occurrences have been political in practically all instances.
3. Early in 1954 there was talk of sending Army reinforcements to Huila and Tolima. However, as conditions gradually improved, there turned out to be little need for troop movements. Order for the most part has been restored by local detachments, although in some instances these were slightly strengthened. Activities have been confined chiefly to patrolling. There have been relatively few incidents during the past two months. The only announcements issued by the government have been that the situation is well under control and that order has been restored. Guerrilla leaders fear that the government still may prosecute them, and most have left Bogota. They say that if Army or other government officials continue to pursue and persecute them, they may be forced to resume guerrilla activities.

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